



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE
***FEDERAL FIREARMS, CARJACKING CHARGES
FILED TODAY AGAINST GALLEGOS, DIAZ***

SALT LAKE CITY – A federal grand jury returned a three-count indictment Wednesday morning charging Danny Martin Gallegos, age 49, and Juan Carlos Diaz, age 27, who escaped from the Daggett County jail last month, with possession of firearms following a felony conviction, possession of stolen firearms, and carjacking.

The charges in today's indictment stem from events which occurred in Utah on Sept. 29, 2007, while Gallegos and Diaz were on the run from law enforcement officers following their escape from the jail.

"We believe federal charges are warranted in this case given the dangerous conduct the defendants engaged in while they were attempting to evade law enforcement officers. Their conduct put private citizens and law enforcement officers at risk," U.S. Attorney for Utah Brett L. Tolman said today.

Count one of the indictment, possession of firearms following a felony conviction, alleges the two were in possession of two handguns and a rifle on Sept. 29, 2007. The potential maximum penalty for this count is up to 10 years in federal prison.

Count two of the indictment alleges that the firearms in their possession were stolen. This count also carries a potential penalty of up to 10 years in federal prison.

The final count of the indictment, carjacking, alleges Gallegos and Diaz, with intent to cause death and serious bodily harm, took a motor vehicle from another person by force, violence, and intimidation on Sept. 29, 2007. The potential maximum penalty for carjacking is up to 15 years in federal prison.

Defendants charged in indictments are presumed innocent unless or until proven guilty in court.

Federal prosecutors are coordinating with Daggett County and Utah Department of Corrections officials on the investigation and charges. Although a final decision has not been made, federal prosecutors anticipate issuing writs for Diaz and Gallegos to appear for initial appearances in federal court. (Gallegos remains hospitalized and Diaz is in custody in Utah.) Federal arrest warrants were issued based on the indictment returned today.

U.S. Marshals, along with other local, state, and federal agents assisted in apprehending the pair. Utah Department of Corrections agents assigned to the Utah Project Safe Neighborhoods Task Force are working with federal prosecutors on the case.

“We want to send a strong message that whenever an individual chooses to use a firearm against a police officer, we will take every measure to prevent them from doing it again,” James A. Thompson, Chief Deputy, U.S. Marshals Service, said today.

Utah Department of Corrections Executive Director Tom Patterson said, “I am appreciative to all those who assisted in the aggressive weeklong search for these fugitives. This apprehension was a result of the coordinated efforts of the U. S. Marshals Service, Corrections, state and local law enforcement agencies in Utah and Wyoming.”

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